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ABSTRACT

Originally designed for use in combination with a museum visit to the Islamic Arts of the Book from the Vever Collection exhibition at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., the document presents a teaching package about Islamic art during the late 16th-early 17th century. Themes in Islamic art addressed included the use of brilliant color, intricate details, pattern, modular structure in composition, and successive combinations of units. Slides and discussion questions show students how Islamic books, called albums, were made. Four student activities are outlined: (1) Islamic motifs and patterns that show how intricate abstract designs were made by combining squares, rectangles, triangles, and circles; (2) how to create albums; (3) using calligraphy to write words and sentences that also form a picture; and 4) an exercise to help identify the main characteristics of Islamic poetry. The section on background information for teachers describes the five pillars of Islam, how Islamic art is defined, the importance of calligraphy, and how books have always been held in high esteem. The final section is a list of resources for obtaining further information, and programs about the Islamic world, and a suggested reading list for teachers. (KM)

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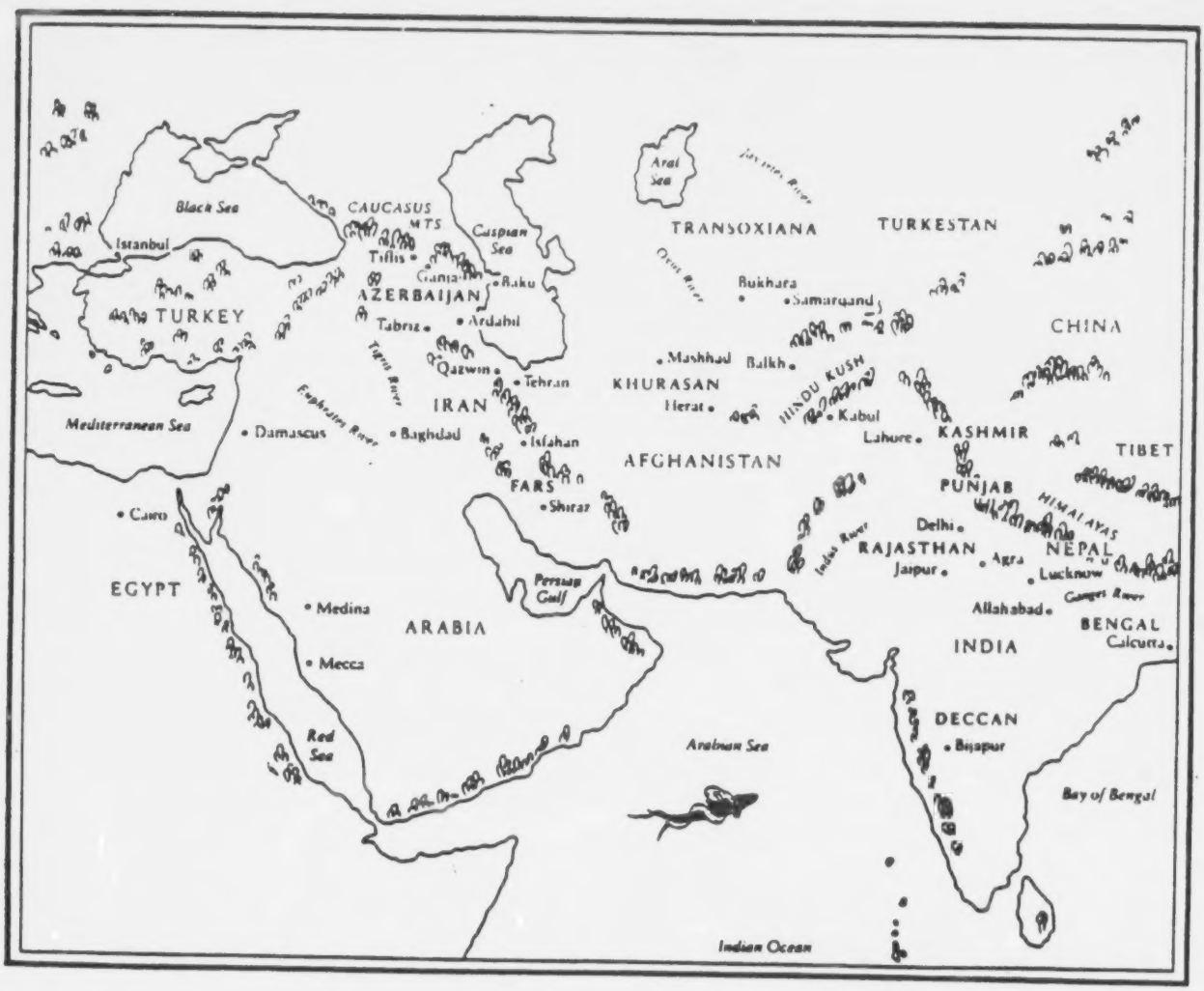
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PUNJAB
Shiraz
HIMALAYAS
Cairo
Delhi
Indus River
RAJASTHAN
NEPAL
Jaipur
Agra
Lucknow
Persian Gulf
Ganges River
EGYPT
Medina
ARABIA
Allahabad
BENGAL
Calcutta
INDIA
Mecca
DECCAN
Red Sea
Bijapur
Arabian Sea
Bay of Bengal
Indian Ocean

TEACHER'S PACKET

Prepared by Sarah Ridley for the Education Department,
Arthur M. Sackler Gallery,
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TEACHER'S PACKET

This teacher's packet was developed to help you and your students look closely at Islamic painting. It consists of two sections: a pre-visit slide packet and post-visit activities for students. Background information on Islam and Islamic art is produced for teachers.

SLIDE PACKET

The slide packet is designed to be used before a visit to the museum. The packet includes a series of slides and questions that will stimulate discussion on Islamic art and help students explore Islamic painting.

ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

The activities are designed to be done after the slide show and visit to the museum. The activities build on concepts presented in the slide packet and museum visit.
A brief introduction to a number of relevant topics is also provided. Topics covered include:

- The Islamic world
- Islamic art
- Calligraphy
- Books
- Motifs and patterns

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

The section on background information also includes aids for lesson planning, such as:

- List of suggested reading for teachers
- Resources
- Map
- Glossary

EVALUATION FORMS

We ask that you fill in the evaluation forms for our use in devising teacher's packets in the future.

SLIDE PACKET

1. Introduction for Teachers:
   Looking at Islamic Paintings
2. Lesson

1. INTRODUCTION FOR TEACHERS:

LOOKING AT ISLAMIC PAINTINGS

The enclosed slides and questions were selected to help you and your students explore the intricacy, dynamism, and design of Islamic painting. The slides in this packet are of paintings or painted illustrations from Islamic books; several of the slides and questions provide information about how the books were made. Other slides are used to illustrate ways of looking at Islamic painting.

Islamic paintings are dense with meticulous detail. The multiplicity of decoration, pattern, color, and perspective can overwhelm a first-time viewer. A close, patient look at an Islamic painting will yield an appreciation of its artistry and content.

The enclosed slides have been selected to give full play to the elegance and artistry of Islamic painting. Islamic painting must be viewed slowly; a single glance does not allow the discovery of what is in the rich patterning. We hope that in spending time looking at these slides you and your students will discover the richness of the images in Islamic painting and develop an increased interest in design and pattern.

This guide is arranged to aid you in presenting the slides in the classroom and to facilitate the students' participation in class discussion. Information for the teacher is written in uppercase and lowercase letters. QUESTIONS FOR THE STUDENTS ARE WRITTEN IN UPPERCASE LETTERS ONLY.

The information for each slide is organized in the following manner:

1) IDENTIFICATION
   Title of painting, artist, region of origin, date, media, accession number.
2) DESCRIPTION
   Information about the image.
3) DISCUSSION
   Suggested questions to encourage class discussion.

KEY POINTS TO CONVEY TO YOUR STUDENTS

The questions that accompany the slide packets focus on the following themes, which are key to appreciating Islamic art.

COLOR--Paintings are iridescent with jewel-like colors.

DETAIL--Islamic art is full of intricate detail. Looking at the art is most rewarding if you are prepared to slow down and look closely to discover the richness of the images.

PATTERN--Islamic art is often composed of individual designs that are repeated to create an overall pattern.

MODULAR STRUCTURE--Islamic art is often composed of a number of images/scenes/sections that are combined to produce a larger design.

SUCCESSIVE COMBINATIONS--While small sections are combined, the larger combinations do not destroy the identity and character of the smaller units.

The following lesson may be used as it appears, or you may build upon and change it to match your own teaching methods and interests.

2. LESSON

Image 1

<u>A Seated Princess</u>
Painting attributed to Muhammad-Sharif Musawwir
Borders inscribed to Muhammad Murad Samarqandi
Iran (Bukhara?), ca. 1600
Opaque watercolor and gold on paper mounted on an album page
S86.0304

The slide shows an album page consisting of a central image surrounded by a colorfully decorated border. The central image and the border were created by different artists. Close inspection of the princess reveals that various figures and animals make up the coat she is wearing.

Albums are included under the heading "Islamic books." Drawings or paintings were often combined with pieces of calligraphy and bound in an album, not because they told a story but simply because they pleased the collector. They might be compiled from a variety of different sources, just as we might gather together images from a number of different places to create a scrapbook. Images created by different artists in different places were combined in a single album. Artists were sometimes specially commissioned to create an entire album.

SLIDE 1

*Flash slide 1 on the screen for a few seconds.

This first painting has been included to motivate the students to look closely at the works of art they are shown and to discover the rewards of careful looking.

LOOK AT THE PAINTING QUICKLY AND, IGNORING THE BORDER, DESCRIBE THE CENTRAL IMAGE.

*Put the slide on the screen again.
Wait and see how long it takes the students to discover that the central image contains a variety of animals and figures skillfully hidden in the coat of the princess. Emphasize the DETAIL involved in the painting and the rewards of careful looking.

SLIDE 2

DESCRIBE THE ROOM IN WHICH THE PRINCESS IS SEATED.

THE ROOM IS MADE UP OF AREAS OF PATTERN. HOW MANY DIFFERENT SHAPES MAKE UP THE PATTERNS?

-- Notice the lack of perspective, shading to create depth, shadows, three-dimensional treatment of the archway.

ISLAMIC ART IS OFTEN FULL OF <u>DETAIL</u>, WITH <u>MANY IMAGES COMBINED INTO ONE PAINTING</u>. HAVING ACCUSTOMED YOUR EYES TO <u>LOOKING CLOSELY</u> AT ONE PAINTING, USE YOUR NEW SKILLS TO EXAMINE THE NEXT PAINTING.

BLANK PAGE

SLIDE 3

WHAT IS THE FIRST THING YOU SEE WHEN YOU LOOK AT THIS PAINTING?

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MAIN SUBJECT OF THE PAINTING?

Have one student, or a group of students, describe the scenes in the painting and see if they can interpret what is going on.

Emphasize that several scenes have been combined into one painting, each scene being distinct from the next. Together the scenes do not tell a story but rather create the atmosphere of the school and its surrounds.

Move on to slides 4-6, which are details of the painting. Slides 5 and 6 depict stages of manuscript production. Encourage students to further discuss and interpret the painting now that they have more detailed information.

SLIDE 4

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THIS SCENE?

WHAT IS HAPPENING TO THIS STUDENT?

Have your students imagine what might have happened that led up to this scene. Encourage them to describe what part each figure played in the event.

REMEMBERING HOW YOU DESCRIBED THE ROOM IN WHICH THE PRINCESS WAS SEATED, DESCRIBE THE SCHOOLROOM. THINK ESPECIALLY ABOUT THE USE OF PATTERN.

SLIDE 5

CAN YOU TELL WHAT IS GOING ON IN THIS SCENE?

Several stages in the creation of an Islamic manuscript are illustrated here. After paper was made the surface of the paper was burnished and polished with a stone such as the one held by the youth with a red tunic and white turban. Rulings were then drawn onto the page to establish the areas in which the text was to be copied by calligraphers like the scribe seated opposite the youth burnishing the paper. Once the copying of the manuscript was completed, and if it was to include illuminations and paintings, it was passed on to the appropriate artists. The finished folios were then gathered together, bound into protective covers, and trimmed to size.

SLIDE 6

DESCRIBE WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THIS SCENE.

Paper is being made; a group of artisans is dying and flecking paper with gold. Recently made paper can be seen hanging on a line in the foreground.

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SHOW SLIDE 3 AGAIN

LOOK FOR THE COMPLETED MANUSCRIPTS ON THE CARPET.

The various stages of creating manuscripts were supervised by a librarian in charge of coordinating each phase of production and ensuring that the manuscripts were fully and properly copied.

HOW MANY DIFFERENT SCENES MAKE UP THIS PAINTING?

-- the school; people dying, burnishing, and inscribing paper; people cooking noodles; a man performing the call to prayer. Emphasize that the painting is made up of a number of interrelated scenes.

HAVING LOOKED CLOSELY AT TWO PAINTINGS WITH FIGURES IN THEM, NOW WE ARE GOING TO EXAMINE AN ABSTRACT IMAGE.

Image 3

Double-Page Illuminated Frontispiece
From a copy of the Khamsa of Amir Khusraw Dihlawi
Iran (Tabriz), ca. 1530-40
Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper
S86.0067-68

Amir Khusraw Dihlawi (of Delhi) is a celebrated Indian poet who wrote in the Persian language. These two pages are the title page for his Khamsa, or five poems. It begins with a statement in praise of God.

These double pages show the abstraction, repetition, and intricacy typical of nonfigural Islamic painting. Numerous small designs are combined to produce a larger design but do not destroy the integrity of the smaller units. The pattern allows for repeated points of focus within the painting. The effect is dynamic. The eye is drawn through a seemingly infinite number of patterns, each of which is an intricate whole.

SLIDE 7

HOW MANY SEPARATE SECTIONS/AREAS DO YOU SEE IN THIS PAINTING?

-- Several major sections can quickly be defined, but careful looking reveals that each section can be further divided into smaller and smaller areas/modules. The number of modules seems almost infinite.

WHICH SECTION DO YOU NOTICE FIRST? WHY? WHAT DO YOU NOTICE SECOND? WHY?

-- No one section of the pattern is dominate. Each section is equally important and stands on its own. The eye moves from segment to segment. The art is dynamic; one needs time to perceive its entirety.

HOW DOES THE ARTIST CREATE AN INTEGRAL DESIGN FROM A GROUPING OF SMALLER DESIGNS?

IS THERE A UNITY TO THIS PICTURE? HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE ITS UNITY? WHAT GIVES IT ITS UNITY?

SLIDE 8

WHERE IS THE BEGINNING/END OF THE BORDER DESIGN?

WHERE DID THE ARTIST FIRST PUT DOWN HIS PEN TO CREATE THE PATTERN?

ARE EACH OF THE INDIVIDUAL SEGMENTS THAT MAKE UP THE PATTERN THE SAME?

-- At first glance the segments look the same, but each is unique. Close looking reveals the INTRICACY of the designs.

Go back through the slides to A Seated Princess (slides 1 and 2) and reiterate the themes of the slide presentation.

DO THE SAME ASSUMPTIONS OF DESIGN AND PATTERNING APPLY TO A SEATED PRINCESS AS THEY DO TO THE DOUBLE-PAGE FRONTISPIECE (SLIDES 7 AND 8)?

ACTIVITIES
FOR STUDENTS

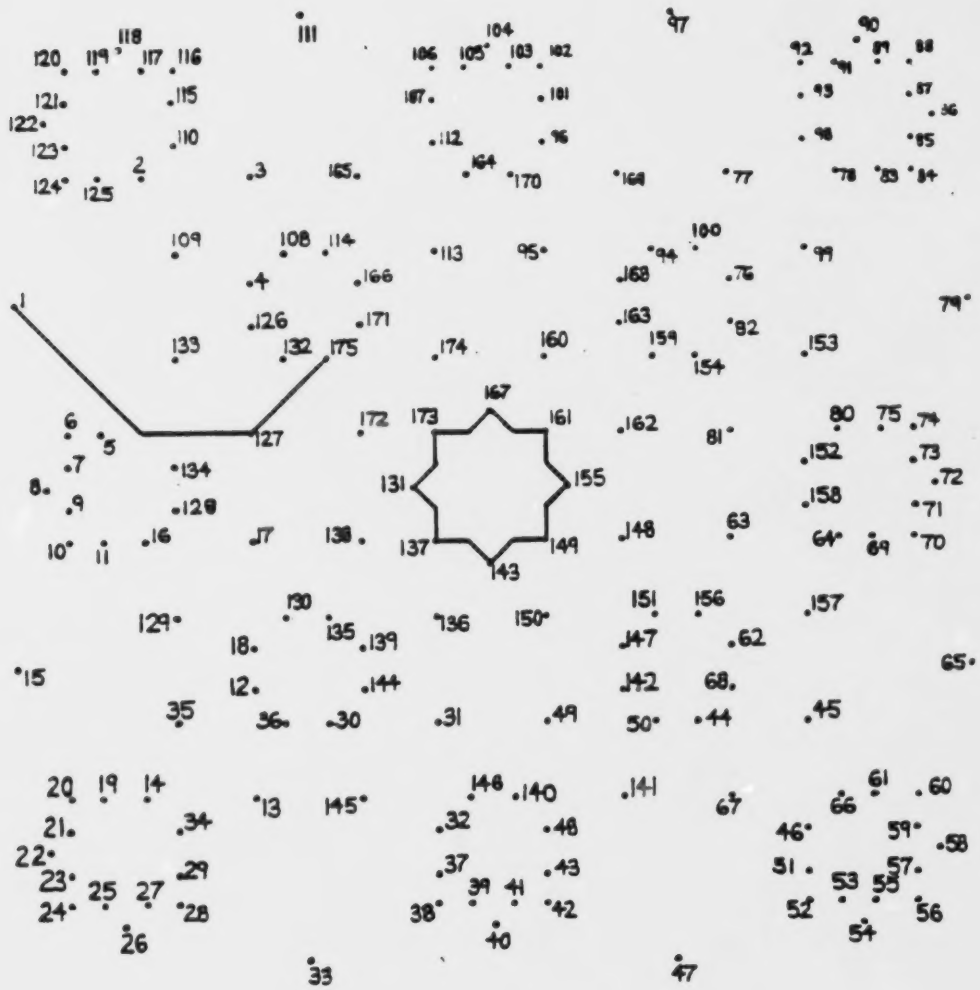
1. Islamic Motifs and Patterns
2. Albums
3. Calligraphy
4. Poetry

See if you can create a pattern of your own. Use the dots to help you.

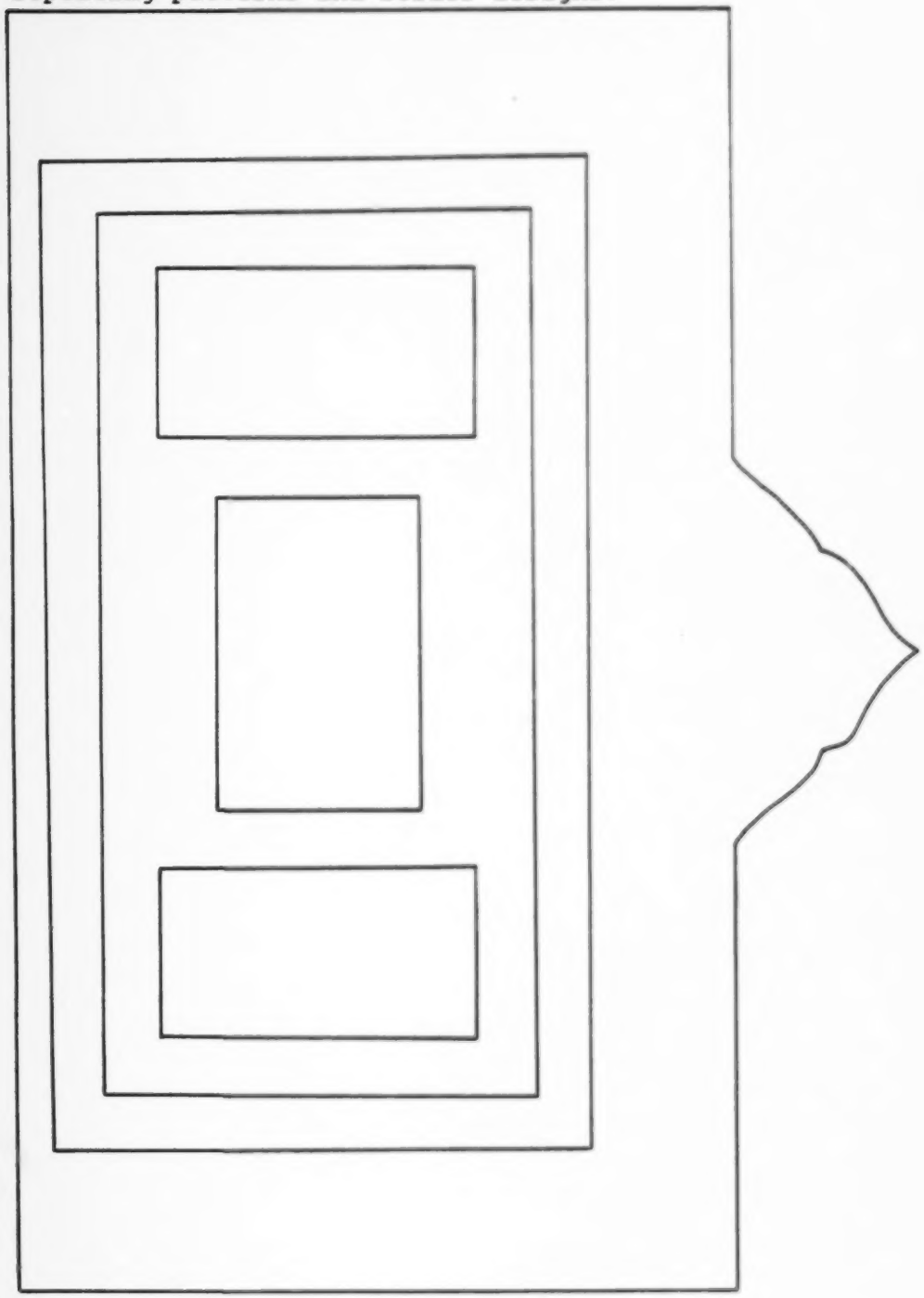
ISLAMIC MOTIFS AND PATTERNS

Islamic art is well known for its intricate abstract designs. Many patterns are made by combining squares, rectangles, triangles, and circles.

Using a ruler, join the dots to create a geometric pattern and pick out the different shapes you see by filling them in with different colors.



Islamic manuscripts are often beautifully decorated with elaborate patterns. Fill in this outline with intricate, repeating patterns and border designs.



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ALBUMS

Many Islamic paintings and drawings were originally bound into books. Some were book illustrations that told a story. Others were individual paintings gathered into elaborate scrapbooks called albums.

Collectors often combined drawings or paintings with works of calligraphy into a single album. The works might have been compiled from a variety of different sources, created by different artists in different places and at different times. Artists were sometimes specially commissioned to create an entire album. The designs that decorate the borders were produced when the album was assembled.

Using repeating patterns that build on each other, create a page for an album that includes several images and decorative borders.

To create an album page you will need to collect:

- -- photographs
- -- pictures from magazines
- -- pictures you have painted
- -- plain paper, wrapping paper, or paper you have made. You may paint your design and/or border directly on one piece of paper, or use different papers and assemble them to create an album page. You might also want marbleized paper to use for part of the page.
- -- glue
- -- paint
- -- paintbrushes.

Choose one picture that you particularly like for the main image on your album page.

You might wish to copy a favorite poem, saying, or essay as your text, or you might wish to write your own text. Remember, the calligraphy is as important as the border and other designs.

Now glue the image onto a piece of paper.

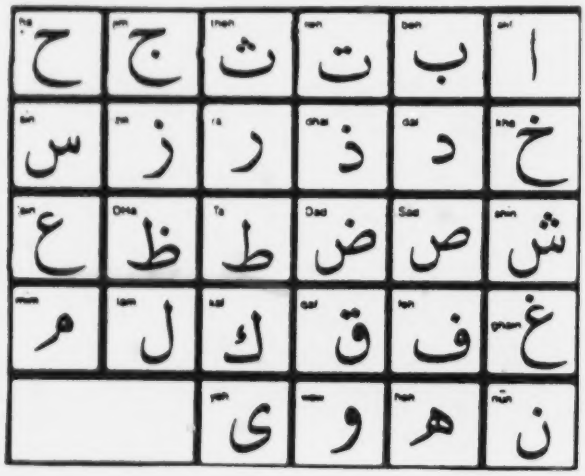
On plain paper create a border design of your own and then use it to frame the central image.

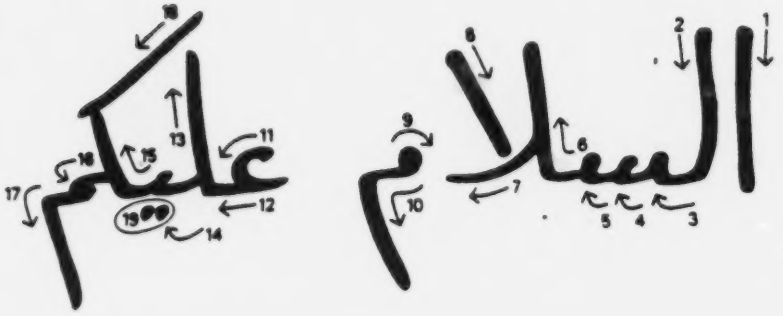
You may wish to combine several album pages and create your own album. Or several friends could create an album together.

CALLIGRAPHY

Muslims believe that the word of God was revealed to Muhammed. These words are the basis of Islam. They are preserved in the Islamic sacred book, the Koran.

Many exquisite versions of the Koran have been written. Calligraphy, the beautiful hand lettering of Arabic script, has become an art form. Twenty-eight Arabic letters make up a limited number of basic strokes, which are vertical, horizontal, and diagonal. Arabic is read from right to left.





This inscription means, "Peace be with you," and is used as a greeting. It is pronounced "salamu alaykum." Try writing it yourself. The arrows tell you in which direction you must go.

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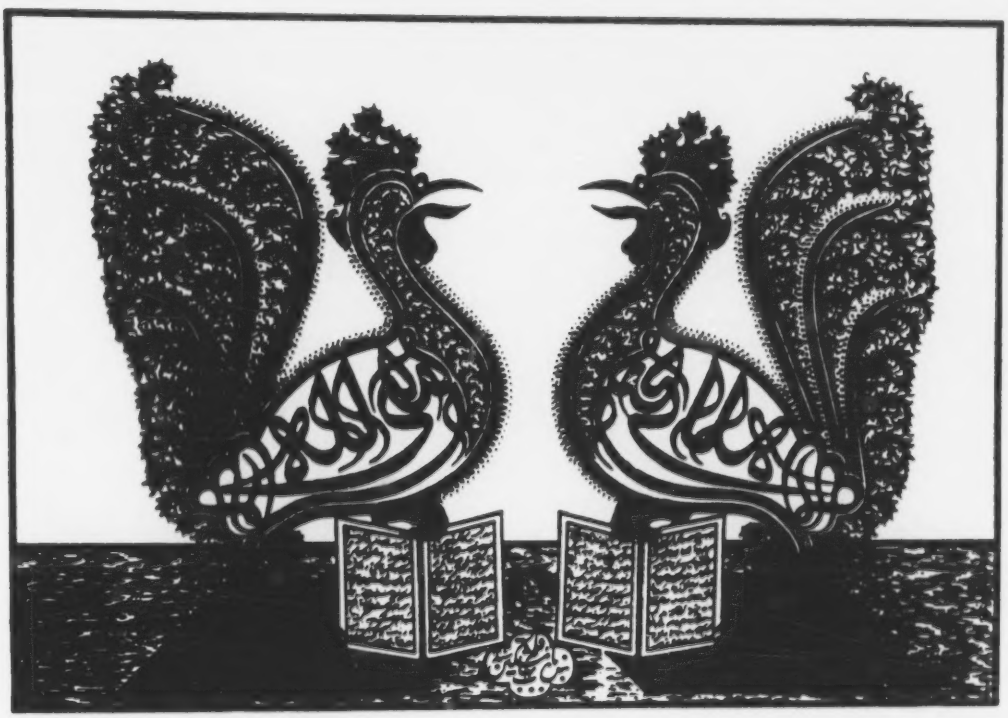
By altering the length and thickness of the strokes, you can change the appearance of the script without changing its basic character. The result is a wide range of styles.

Words could be made in straight lines, circles, squares, and interlaced patterns. Individual letters might be embellished with leaf forms or braided into knots. The calligrapher can expand or contract a letter to fit the space allotted to it. Sometimes words or sentences are written so that they form a picture.



From Islamic Calligraphy, Musee d'art et d'histoire, Geneva, 1988, p. 159

See if you can write a word or a sentence so that it also forms a picture.

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POETRY

Islamic paintings are often accompanied by poems, which are written directly on the painting. The poems often duplicate the feeling of the painting. For example, a painting entitled A Prince and Princess Embrace is surrounded by the following three couplets:

> Your figure is like the delicate cypress,
> O my beloved, your stature is like the fir.
>
> Even if the cyprus reaches the height of the lote tree,
> When will it be equal to your stature?
>
> Without embracing the sapling of your stature,
> When shall I eat the fruit of the tree of hope?

The poet Khata'i wrote the following poem, which is included in a book of his collected poems:

> I have never seen anyone so beautiful as you on the earth,
> never in this world anyone so gorgeous as you.
> Truly, within the garden of the soul there can be no stature
> so elegant as your tall, erect cypress.
> Although there are many beauties among humanity, there is
> none, O beauty, so radiant as you.
> In the garden of beauties there is no one
> with rose-red cheeks like yours.
> Never have I seen among the poets of the age, Khata'i, such
> a distracted nightingale as you.

1. What is the central theme of each of the poems?

2. What is the beloved compared to?

3. Compare and contrast the form of these two poems.

Both of these poems use the image of the cypress tree, a tall and elegant evergreen. The cypress is a common element in Islamic poetry and always represents the stature of the beloved.
The lote tree is believed to be the tallest tree in Paradise.

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Islamic poems often include highly conventionalized expressions of unrequited love. The beloved is a remote, cold, uncaring object of the lover's ardor and fervent adoration. The lover is miserable, wretched, downtrodden, studiously ignored by the beloved, and driven to distraction by his many and more successful rivals. The two couplets below are inscribed on an album page in the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery.

> How long are you going to wound me with grief?
> Keep me wandering in the lane of separation?
>
> If in the end you will raise me from the dust,
> Why do you cast me away like an arrow?

1. What images are used to portray the relationship between the lover and the beloved?

2. Why do you think each of the sentences is in the form of a question?

3. Who holds the power in the relationship between the lover and the beloved?

4. Based on your analysis of the three poems, write a poem of your own that is inspired by their theme, form, and content.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
FOR TEACHERS

THE ISLAMIC WORLD

The religion of Islam was founded by Muhammad, who was born around A.D. 570 in present-day Mecca, Saudi Arabia. When he was forty, Muhammad had a vision that he was commanded by the archangel Gabriel to proclaim the one true God, Allah. He at first thought that he had gone mad, but with the encouragement of his wife, Khadija, he began preaching the revelations he received from Allah. These revelations centered on proclaiming one God, Allah, and abandoning all other idols. Muhammad began preaching in Mecca but because he and his followers were subject to intensifying persecution, he fled to nearby Medina in A.D. 622. That event, the hijra, marks the beginning of the Muslim calendar. In Medina, Muhammad's following grew rapidly and in A.D. 630 he captured Mecca.

Muhammad dictated the tenants of his faith to his followers, who wrote them in a collection known as the Koran. The Koran is the holy book of Islam that sets out the commandments for the believers of Islam. Muhammad said that the Koran was the word of God and that Muhammad, as God's prophet, was merely serving as God's mouthpiece.

THE FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM

Every Muslim adheres to five distinct acts of devotion known as the Five Pillars. These are:

1) Shahada: the witnessing of only one God and Muhammad as His prophet. Shahada means accepting the oneness of God and His message as revealed in the Koran and in the life and example of Muhammad.

2) Muslims are required to pray five times a day. These prayers, highly stylized and general, are recited at fixed times in the day, beginning at dawn and continuing at mid-afternoon, sunset, and late evening.

3) Zakat: the giving of alms, usually calculated at about 2 1/2 percent of an individual's wealth. Until recently, it was

given privately by those who could afford to give.

4) Ramadan: the month of fasting. During Ramadan, which lasts a lunar month, Muslims are supposed to abstain from eating and drinking, even water, between sunrise and sunset.

5) Hajj: pilgrimage. Every Muslim is supposed to make a two-week pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia once in his or her lifetime, provided they have the material means to do so.

Muhammad died in A.D. 632. The rapid expansion of the Islamic faith in the centuries following his death spread the Islamic religion from Spain in the west to India in the east. Although the countries brought under the sway of Islam preserved their separate identities, they developed a shared set of cultural values, based largely on the Koran. While Islam gives guidelines for almost every aspect of individual and communal life, Islamic culture cannot be defined purely in religious terms. It encompasses as well regional, social, ethnic, and political dimensions that are distinct from the faith itself. In art certain architectural forms, ideas about design, and reverence for calligraphy and the book emerged as important Islamic traditions but with regional distinctions.

Two major groups of Muslims are known as the Shia and Sunni. The term shia, which literally means "party," is commonly used to refer to the group of Muslims who are "partisans of Ali." These Muslims believed that Ali--Muhammad's cousin, son-in-law, and ardent supporter--was Muhammad's successor. Moreover, they believed that Ali's descendants were the rightful successors to Muhammad. The term sunni, which literally means the "follower of tradition," refers to the branch of Islam whose adherents believed that Muhammad's successor should be elected. They now comprise 85 percent of all Muslims. A sufi is one who espouses mystical approaches to the understanding of God within the Sunni and Shia sects of Islam.

ISLAMIC ART

How is Islamic art defined? This question is the subject of continual debate among scholars today.

Islamic art is commonly interpreted as referring to a culture or civilization in which "the majority of the population or at least the ruling elite profess the faith of Islam." (Oleg Grabar, The Formation of Islamic Art, Yale University Press, 1987.)

Yet much Islamic art has little if anything to do with the faith itself, and works of art made by or for non-Muslims may be legitimately described as Islamic art.

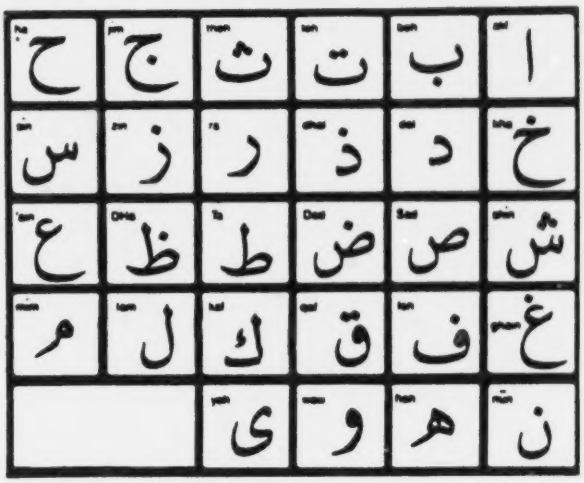
Islamic art is often described as being dominated by the abstract and is contrasted to Western art, which commonly incorporates nature and human beings. Although orthodox Islam condemns the depiction of human images, ruling elites especially in Iran, Central Asia, and India were often more liberal in their attitude toward figural representation. Some Muslims argue that the ban applies only to the depiction of God. They would argue that God cannot be represented because He cannot be conceived of in his entirety. It is true, however, that much of the visual arts of the whole Islamic world are abstract. Particularly characteristic of Islamic art is the central role of calligraphy. This grew out of the role of the word in the revelation of the Koran and the belief that the word is the visual manifestation of God. Since the depiction of the natural world is discouraged, abstract designs are abundant. The word, spoken or written, therefore, takes an important place in art.

CALLIGRAPHY

The Koran, or book of recitations of the word of God, is the holy book of Islam. Received in Arabic by the prophet Muhammad in the early seventh century A.D., the Koran is the foundation of the faith of Islam. It is regarded as a manifestation of divine power and authority. The written word was revered, and the alphabet with which it is recorded is thus invested with religious significance.

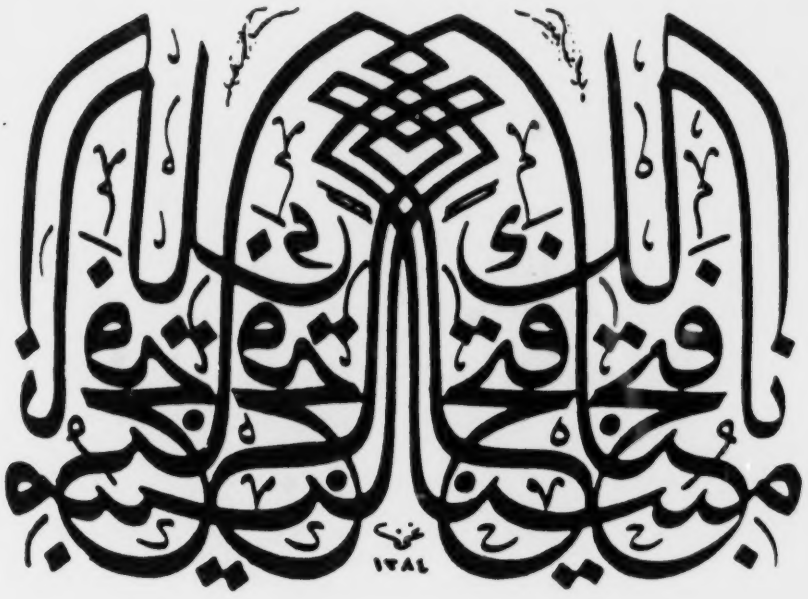
Since calligraphy is viewed as the visual manifestation of God, to copy the Koran in a perfect hand was considered a pious act that required great skill. The desire to give a clear and appropriate form to the words of the Koran raised the art of calligraphy to preeminent status in the Islamic world. The high status of calligraphy ensured that the men who created it were treated with great respect.

Calligraphy has been described as the archetypal art of Islam because of the tremendous flexibility and visual potential of the Arabic alphabet. Its twenty-eight letters derive from a limited number of basic strokes, which are vertical, horizontal, and diagonal.



By altering the length and thickness of the strokes, one can change the appearance of the script without changing its basic character. The result is a wide range of styles.

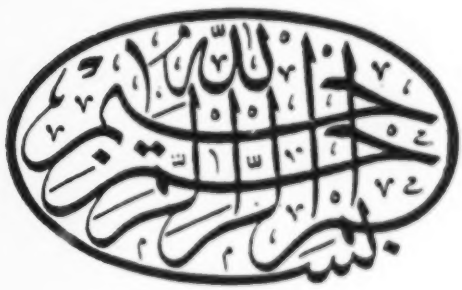
The inherent flexibility of the letters of the various scripts allowed Arabic script to be adapted to a number of different media, including textiles, ceramics, and architecture. The words could be rendered in straight lines, circles, squares, and interlaced patterns; individual letters might be embellished with leaf forms or braided into knots; and the calligrapher could expand or contract a letter to fit the space he allotted to it.



From Ismail R. al Faruqui and Lois Lamya al Faruqui, Cultural Atlas of Islam, p. 369

36 BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A wide variety of styles of calligraphy developed to serve different purposes. When copying the Koran a majestic, clear style was used while more informal styles developed for other manuscripts and record keeping. Mastering the various styles was a difficult task, complicated by the belief that only the pure in spirit could write flawlessly. It was believed, however, that if the calligrapher wrote the bismillah (the dedication to God) beautifully, God would pardon his sins.



b In oval shape, 19th cty (a)

c In Ta'liq, by 'Abdulqādir 1351/1932

e In a stork's shape, Turkey, 19th cty

d By Aḥmed Karaḥiṣārī, Turkey, 16th cty

Forms of bismillah, from A. Schimmel, Islamic Calligraphy, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1970

BOOKS

Islamic culture has always held books in high esteem. Books were more than just texts in the Islamic world; they established the status and learning of an individual. Thus courtiers and connoisseurs assembled substantial libraries to demonstrate their standing in society. During times of war or social upheaval, celebrated collections were captured as valuable booty.

Books were masterfully designed and constructed of the finest materials and with exquisite craftsmanship. The most elaborate manuscripts were produced in the imperial workshops, but books were available at other levels of society as well. The production of a manuscript required the combined efforts of author, calligrapher, illuminator, painter, and bookbinder.

Bound in leather and carefully decorated with geometric designs and embellished with gold, the covers of the books are beautiful to the eye. Books were

> ...written on parchment (prepared skins of goat and sheep), vellum (calf skins) or, mainly in Egypt, on papyrus. Later paper was used; this had to be imported form China until the secret of its manufacture was revealed to the Arabs, allegedly after the defeat of the Chinese at the battle of Samarkand in 750. The paper was pure rag paper made from linen fibres.
>
> Pens were made of sharpened reeds and brushes from squirrel, buffalo, camel or cat hair set in feather quills.
>
> Lamp black mixed with soot and gum arabic (a sticky secretion from certain types of acacia tree) was used for sketching; waterproof ink was made from vitriol (sulphate of iron) and gall nuts. Pigments were mostly mineral: for instance, cinnabar and sulphide of mercury for reds, lapis lazuli and azurite for blue, malachite for green and shades of ochre for yellow, browns and reds. White was produced from chalk or lead carbonite. Some organic pigments were also used such as forms of cochineal and indigo. All pigments were mixed with gum arabic medium. Gold was

> applied as gold leaf of as a crushed metal mixed with animal size.
> (Eva Wilson, Islamic Designs. British Museum Pattern Books. London, British Museum Publications Ltd., 1988)

> While texts were initially copied on parchment, paper was introduced to the Arabo-Persian lands from China in the early centuries of Islam. Its manufacture became a refined art form, often involving warm colors, as well as gold. Burnishing the paper surface gave the pages a smooth, lustrous finish. After the paper was prepared, the text was copied by a scribe and the manuscript was passed on to the illuminator for its gilded frontispiece and marginal decoration. Finally, illustrations were added by a painter, often in close consultation with the patron.
> (Holly Edwards, Patterns and Precision: The Arts and Sciences of Islam, 1982.)

Manuscripts were largely religious, poetic, historic, or scholarly in content. They were copied by different artists and calligraphers over the centuries. Poetic manuscripts were especially popular in Iran and the illustrations became elaborate full-page compositions. One of the most frequently copied books was the Shahnamma, or Book of Kings, written by Firdawsi. Often recited aloud, this epic is a fascinating combination of history and legend.

In addition, a limited number of illustrated theological texts were illustrated. Popular belief states that Islam strictly forbids the depiction of human forms in religious contexts. The theological manuscripts, however, sometimes include scenes of the prophet Muhammad and other figures, but these would not have been used in religious ceremonies.

Albums are a type of Islamic book. Within albums, drawings or paintings were often combined with pieces of calligraphy and bound in one volume, not because they told a story but simply because they pleased the collector. They might be compiled from a variety of different sources, just as we might gather together images from a number of different places to create a scrapbook.

At times images that had been created by different artists, in different places, and at different times were combined in a single album page. In other cases, artists were specially commissioned to create an entire album.

MOTIFS AND PATTERNS

Objects of Islamic workmanship are often recognizable from their decorative motifs. These designs--based on flowers and leaves, geometric patterns, human or animal figures, and the written word--are often combined in ingenious ways. Floral forms may be executed with geometric precision and calligraphic strokes may be shaped into animal forms.

Patterns comprise a number of individual segments that when brought together form a design. No segment of the design takes precedence over the other; each is appreciated in turn as the eye moves from focal point to focal point. The modular structures create an impression of infinity.

Islamic art includes all the arts of the culture and not just those that fulfill a religious function. Books, garments, buildings, and ceramic and metal wares are all appropriate surfaces for Islamic art. Many objects were conceived not only as functional and decorative items but also as a reminder to its owner or user of the existence of God.

LIST OF RESOURCES

LIST OF RESOURCES

The following organizations in the Washington, D.C., area provide information and programs that relate to the Islamic world. Many programs are free; others charge a fee. Some organizations will place your name on their mailing list free of charge. For more information, call the number listed for each entry.

Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

Mailing address:
Smithsonian Institution
Washington D.C. 20560

Street address:
1050 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington D.C. 20560

357-4886

The newest museum of Asian art at the Smithsonian, the Sackler Gallery offers a variety of programs ranging from school and public tours to lectures, films, and specialized seminars and workshops. An extensive library on the art of Asia is open to the public by appointment Monday through Friday 10 AM to 5 PM (no charge).

Smithsonian Resident Associate Program

Mailing address:
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, D.C. 20560

Street address:
1100 Jefferson Dr., S.W.
Rm. 3077
Washington D.C. 20560

357-3030

The Smithsonian Resident Associate Program offers many lectures and courses on Asia throughout the year. (Fee)

The Woodrow Wilson Center
Asia Program

Mailing address:
Smithsonian Institution
Washington D.C. 20560
357-1937

Street address:
1000 Jefferson Drive, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20560

The Wilson Center sponsors lectures on the society, culture, politics, and economics of various Asian nations, often by distinguished scholars, officials, or experts. (No charge)

Textile Museum
2320 S St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008
667-0441
The Textile Museum occasionally features textiles from the Islamic world.

Walters Gallery
600 N. Charles St.
Baltimore, Md. 21201
(301) 547-9000
The Walters collection includes works from the Islamic world.

Center for Contemporary Arab Studies
Georgetown University
501 Intercultural Center
Washington, D.C.
687-5793
The Community Research Service provides a community outreach program that includes teaching modules on language, math, and science. There is also a library.

Middle East Institute
Library, Islamic Affairs Department
1761 N St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
785-1141

Library of Congress
Department of Near and Middle East
1st and Independence Ave., S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20540
287-5000

Saudi Arabian Embassy
Information Office
601 New Hampshire Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037
The embassy will provide a teacher's kit on request.

MOSQUES AND COMMUNITY CENTERS

Ansaaru Allah Community Church
547 Florida Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001
462-9302

Islamic Center
2551 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008
332-8343
Tours of the mosque are available on request.

Islamic Community Center
15200 New Hampshire Ave.
Silver Spring, Md. 20904
384-3454

Islamic Community Center
6010 Columbia Pike
Falls Church, Va. 22041
750-1668

Islamic Community Center of Maryland
601 E. Franklin Ave.
Silver Spring, Md. 20901
577-2891

Islamic Education Center
12010 Seven Locks Road
Potomac, Md. 20854
340-2070
The center includes a bookstore. The Imam (priest), Muhammed Asi, is available for talks. (No charge)

Masjid Muhammad
1519 4th St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001
483-9302

Moorish Science Temple of America, Inc.
5764 Georgia Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20011
723-9619

Muhammed Mosque
5414 Wilson St.
Baltimore, Md. 21217

RESTAURANTS

Kolbeh Restaurant
1645 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007
342-2000

Persepolis
7141 Wisconsin Avenue
Bethesda, Md. 20814
656-9339

SUGGESTED READING FOR TEACHERS

SUGGESTED READING FOR TEACHERS

The first set of numbers associated with each book is the call number for books in Library at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery. The second set is the call number for the D.C. public library system.

ISLAMIC ART

[709.53 A75] [297 A759] Arnold, Sir Thomas Walker, and Alfred Guillaume, ed. The Legacy of Islam. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1931

"Islamic Minor Arts and Their Influence upon European Work" by A. H. Christie, pp. 108-15; General description of bookbinding/publication, pp. 144-47; Clear, concise description of chronological evolution of architecture with reference to specific mosques, palaces, and fortresses, in "Architecture" by Martin S. Briggs, pp. 155-179; "Law and Society" by David de Santillana, pp. 284-310)

[709.53 R9] [704.9489 R988] Du Ry, Carol J., Art of Islam, N.Y., Henry Abrams, 1970.

(Introduction is a good, brief history of Islam. Includes map of Islamic world at various stages. Chapters are divided by dynasties within which architecture, ceramics, and metalwork are described.)

Ettinghausen, Richard, and Oleg Grabar, The Art and Architecture of Islam: 650-1250. N.Y., Penguin, 1987.

[709.53 F34] Fehrvari, Geza, and Yasin H. Safadi, Fourteen Hundred Years of Islamic Art. London, Khalili Gallery, 1981.

[759.956 F34] [759.95 G778] Gray, Basil, Persian Painting. N.Y., Skira, 1961
(Good chapter on role of painting in Persia.)

[709.53 G7] [709.1767] Grabar, Oleg, The Formation of Islamic Art. New Haven, Connecticut, Yale University Press, 1987

[709.53 E3] Edwards, Holly, Patterns and Precision: The Arts and Sciences of Islam. The National Committee to Honor the 14th Centennial of Islam, ca. 1982.
(Discusses contributions in astronomy, medicine, geography, nature, and cosmology. Arts include calligraphy, manuscripts, ceramics, metalwork, textiles, wood, ivory and glass. Brief, concise description of architecture.)

[709.53 [704.9489 K952w] K96] Kuhnel, Ernst. Islamic Art and Architecture. Translated by Katherine Watson. London, G. Bell & Sons, 1962.
(Introduction is a good general overview of basic concepts in Islamic art and architecture. Chapter on each period. Pp. 89-90 on calligraphy and painting. Pp. 107 on book illumination. Pp. 151-53 on book production and painting. Pp. 165-67 on painting.)

[709.53 L87] Los Angeles Museum of Art. Islamic Art.
Los Angeles, 1973.

[709.53 T15 Rice, David Talbot. Islamic Art. London, Thames & Hudson, 1975.
(Chapters on early Islamic art, Abbasid period; art in persia until Mongol conquest; Spain, Egypt and N. Africa until ca. 1200; Mesopotamia; Persia--Mongol period;

Syria and Egypt--12th-13th centuries; Later Islamic art in N. Africa, Spain, Sicily)

PATTERN IN ISLAMIC ART

[701 B59] Bixler, Harry Nathaniel. A Group-Theoretic Analysis of Symmetry in Two-Dimensional Patterns from Islamic Art. Ann Arbor, Michigan, University Microfilms International, 1984.
(Chapter 2 is on math in Islamic Art.)

[709.53 B9] Burckhardt, Titus. Art of Islam: Language and Meaning. World of Islam Festival Trust, 1976.
(Glossary on p. 199; chapters include "The Question of Images" and "The Common Language of Islamic Art: Calligraphy, Arabesque, Sphere and Cube and Light.")

[745 C8] [745.4491 C934] Critchlow, Keith. Islamic Patterns. London, Thames and Hudson, 1976.

ART OF THE ISLAMIC BOOK

[759.955 A74] Arnold, Sir Thomas Walker. The Islamic Book. Paris, Pegasus Press, 1929.

[655.7 B67] Bosch, Gulnar; John Carswell; and Guy Petherbridge. Islamic Bindings and Bookmaking. Chicago, The Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, 1981.
(Good discussion of development, techniques, and materials of bookmaking. Photos illustrate methods, techniques.)

[745.6 W4] Welch, Anthony. Arts of the Islamic Book. Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell University Press, ca. 1982.

CALLIGRAPHY

[745.6 L4] Lings, Martin. The Quranic Art of Calligraphy and Illumination. [London], World of Islam Festival Trust, 1976.

[741 S36] Safadi, Yasin Hamid. Islamic Calligraphy. London, Thames & Hudson, 1978.

[No call number] Zakariya, Mohamed U. The Calligraphy of Islam: Reflections of the state of the art. Washington, D.C., Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, 1979.

EPIC HISTORY

[891.5 F52L3] [891.551 F522] Levy, R., trans. The Epic of the Kings: Shahnama, National Epic of Persia by Firdawsi. London, Routledge & K. Paul, 1967.

[759.956 R76] Robinson, Basil William. Persian Painting and the National Epic. Oxford, Oxford University Press, ca. 1983.

[759.956 W3] Welch, Stuart C. A King's Book of Kings: The Shah-nameh of Shah Tahmasp. New York Metropolitan Museum of Art. Distributed by New York Graphic Society, Greenwich, Connecticut; 1972.

ISLAMIC HISTORY

[709.53 F35] Fisher, Stanley, ed. Islam and the Medieval West. Binghampton, N.Y., 1975.
(Includes "Muslim Decorative Arts and Painting--Their Nature and Impact on the Medieval West" by Richard Eittinghausen; "Islamic Architecture and the West--Influences and Parallels" by Oleg Grabar.)

MUGHAL HISTORY AND ART

[954 G15] Gascoigne, Bamber, The Great Moghuls. London, Cape, 1971

[759.954 B194] Beach, Milo Cleveland, The Imperial Image, paintings for the Mughal Court, Washington, D.C., Smithsonian Institution, 1981.

ISLAM

[291 A2] Abingdon Dictionary of Living Religions. Keith Crim, general ed. Nashville, Tenn., Abingdon, ca. 1981.

[909 A64] Al-Faruqi, Isma'il, Cultural Atlas of Islam. N.Y., Macmillan, ca. 1986.

[953 L681] [909.09 L693] Lewis, Bernard, ed., Islam and the Arab World. N.Y., Alfred A. Knopf, 1976.
(Chapter 1; "The Faith and the Faithful" by Bernard Lewis, defines meaning of Islam to its broadest sense and the Five Pillars of Faith. Chapter 2: "The Man-Made Setting" by Richard Ettinghausen; discusses the characteristics of Islamic art, art forms [calligraphy, lack of sculpture, mosques, color, decorative art and textiles]).

[No call number] Smith, Houston, The Religions of the World. New York, Harper & Row, 1958.

Slide List

1
A Seated Princess
Iran (Bukhara?), ca. 1600
Illustration: 19.4 x 11.2 cm
S86.0304

2
A Seated Princess (Detail)
Iran (Bukhara?), ca. 1600
S86.0304

3
A School Scene
Iran (Tabriz), ca. 1540
Illustration: 27.0 x 15.1 cm
S86.0221

4
A School Scene (Detail)
Iran (Tabriz), ca. 1540
S86.0221

5
A School Scene (Detail)
Iran (Tabriz), ca. 1540
S86.0221

6
A School Scene (Detail)
Iran (Tabriz), ca. 1540
S86.0221

7
Double-Page Illuminated Frontispiece
Iran (Tabriz), ca. 1530-40
Page: 30.2 x 18.3 cm
S86.0067-68

8
Double-Page Illuminated Frontispiece (Detail)
Iran (Tabriz), ca. 1530-40
S86.0067-68